

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND PRACTICES COMMISSION**

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION,	:	
Petitioner,	:	
	:	
	:	
v.	:	DOCKET NO. DI-21-007
	:	
GREGORY M. HOATS,	:	
Respondent.	:	

ORDER GRANTING MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT

This matter is before the Professional Standards and Practices Commission (“Commission”) on a Notice of Charges and Motion for Summary Judgment filed by the Department of Education (“Department”). After consideration of the record in this matter and the applicable law, the Commission finds that summary judgment in favor of the Department is appropriate and enters this Order as follows:

BACKGROUND AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Gregory M. Hoats (“Respondent”) holds an Instructional I certificate in the area of Elementary K-6. Respondent was also issued a LT Sub Emergency Permit with No Educational Obligation in the area of Technology Education PK-12. The Department initiated disciplinary proceedings against Respondent with the filing of a Notice of Charges on January 28, 2021. The Notice of Charges alleges that Respondent was convicted of Endangering the Welfare of Children. Certified copies of the pertinent court documents are attached to the Notice of Charges. Simultaneous with the filing of the Notice of Charges, the Department filed a Motion for Summary Judgment requesting that the Commission enter summary judgment in its favor and revoke Respondent’s certificates and employment eligibility based upon his conviction.

As required, the Department mailed copies of the Notice of Charges and Motion for Summary Judgment to Respondent at his last-known address. Respondent did not file an answer to either pleading.

The Commission heard oral argument at its regularly scheduled meeting on March 15, 2021. Respondent was not present.

SUMMARY JUDGMENT STANDARD

Summary Judgment is appropriate only when, after examining the whole record in the light most favorable to the non-moving party, there is no genuine issue of material fact and the moving party is entitled to judgment as a matter of law. Snyder v. Department of Environmental Resources, 588 A.2d 1001 (Pa. Cmwlth. 1991).

MATERIAL FACTS

The material facts are not in dispute.¹ On October 3, 2019, Respondent was convicted in the Court of Common Pleas of Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania of Endangering the Welfare of Children, 18 Pa.C.S. § 4304(a)(1). The facts underlying Respondent's conviction are that he dragged a 5-year-old student by the arm up two flights of stairs and struck the student twice in the face with a folder, causing the student's head to strike a locker.

DISCUSSION

The Department seeks the revocation of Respondent's certificates and employment eligibility pursuant to section 9b(a)(2) of the Educator Discipline Act ("Act"). 24 P.S. § 2070.9b(a)(2). That section mandates, in relevant part, that the Commission

1. Since Respondent did not file a responsive pleading, the only facts considered by the Commission are those alleged in the Department's Notice of Charges, which are deemed admitted and incorporated herein by reference. See 22 Pa. Code § 233.115(c)(1); 1 Pa. Code § 35.37; See *also Kinniry v. Professional Standards and Practices Commission*, 678 A.2d 1230 (Pa. Cmwlth. 1996).

shall direct the Department to revoke the certificate and employment eligibility of an educator convicted of a crime set forth in section 111(e)(1) through (3) of the Public School Code of 1949 or a crime involving moral turpitude upon the filing of a certified copy of the verdict, judgment or sentence of the court with the Commission. Id.²

Here, the Department has presented the Commission with certified court records of Respondent's conviction for Endangering the Welfare of Children, which is a crime set forth in section 111(e)(1) of the Public School Code of 1949 and a crime involving moral turpitude *per se*. 24 P.S. § 1-111(e)(1); 22 Pa. Code § 237.9(c)(1). Therefore, the Commission must direct the Department to revoke Respondent's certificates and employment eligibility.³ 24 P.S. § 2070.9b(a)(2); *See also* Bowalick v. Dep't. of Educ., 840 A.2d 519, 522 (Pa. Cmwlth. 2004) (revocation of a teaching certificate on summary judgment is appropriate upon proof of a conviction of a crime of moral turpitude); *citing* Kinniry v. Professional Stds. & Practices Comm'n, 678 A.2d 1230, 1234 (Pa. Cmwlth. 1996).

ORDER

AND NOW, this 16th day of April 2021, upon consideration of the Department of Education's Motion for Summary Judgment, it is hereby ORDERED:

1. The Motion is granted.
2. Pursuant to 24 P.S. § 2070.9b(a)(2), the Department is directed to revoke Respondent's certificates and eligibility to be employed as a charter or cyber

2. The term 'conviction' includes a plea of guilty or nolo contendere. 24 P.S. § 2070.9b(a)(2).

3. An appeal of the Commission's adjudication shall not operate as a stay if the discipline is imposed under section 9b. 24 P.S. § 2070.15. Therefore, the revocation of Respondent's certificates and employment eligibility will be effective immediately.

charter school staff member or a contracted educational provider staff member effective on the date of this Order.

3. Respondent is not eligible to be employed in a school entity in a position requiring certification or as a charter or cyber charter school staff member or contracted educational provider staff member, or eligible for any certificate.
4. In accordance with 24 P.S. § 2070.16(c), the Commission shall not reinstate Respondent's certificates and employment eligibility for the time period set forth in 24 P.S. § 1-111(e).

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND
PRACTICES COMMISSION

By:



Myron Yoder
Chairperson Pro Tempore



Attest:

Shane F. Crosby
Executive Director

Date Mailed: April 16, 2021